

## FOCUS: Economic Development

### Strategies for the Year:

Foster a strong, diversified economy by creating, attracting, and retaining businesses that provide knowledge based, high quality employment opportunities

Support the development of a prepared and successful workforce

Improve community infrastructure to support and encourage economic expansion and opportunity in a global marketplace

### Project

#### Support for Local Businesses - BusinessLINC

#### Description

Utilize the BusinessLINC program to increase sales opportunities for southern Arizona businesses by linking local, national, and international firms/buyers with local suppliers.

#### Accomplishments

\$57 million in new sales for Arizona businesses with \$28 million currently in the pipeline.

Program used as a platform for statewide expansion with a shared database of suppliers supplemented with funding from a \$200,000 Arizona Department of Commerce grant ([www.azbusinesslinc.com](http://www.azbusinesslinc.com))

Provided testimony to the U.S. House Small Business Committee to report on achievements and potentially secure future program funding. The BusinessLINC program was later re-authorized by both the House and Senate.



Foster a strong, diversified economy...

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### **Project**

#### **Tucson Empowerment Zone**

### **Description**

The Empowerment Zone is an elite federal designation providing businesses with tax and financing incentives to locate in distressed areas of our community and provide jobs for local residents.

### **Accomplishments**

Tucson's Empowerment Zone is actively recognized by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development staff as one of the leading sites in the nation because of the establishment of extensive community partnerships and an effective education campaign.

Empowerment Zone staff has conducted over 500 community and business outreach presentations, hosted 7 in-depth tax training classes attended by over 350 businesses, distributed over 12,000 informational flyers, and responded to over 1,500 requests for information. Over 100 commercial building permits have been issued in the Empowerment Zone.



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### **Project**

#### **Assist Businesses with Employee Training**

### **Description**

Expand "on demand" training programs available through agencies such as the Southern Arizona Institute for Advanced Technology and help businesses apply for state workforce development grants to assist employers in training both newly hired employees as well as incumbent employees.

### **Accomplishments**

Over \$4.7 million in state job training grants were received with dollar-for-dollar matches made by the companies to train over 3,600 employees. Reinvestment in local companies upgrades employee skills to make them more competitive and eligible for advancement and promotes Tucson as a desirable business environment.



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### **Project**

#### **Davis-Monthan Environs – Joint Land Use Study**

#### **Description**

This project seeks to preserve the long-term mission of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and ensure the safety of the community by assuring land use compatibility around the base. The City will participate in a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) for the Davis-Monthan environs in partnership with the Arizona Department of Commerce and the Department of Defense. The project will culminate in an update to the Airport Environs Zone Regulations for Davis-Monthan to ensure compatibility in the approach-departure corridor. This multi-faceted plan will include specific recommendations for future development patterns within the "paddle" areas north-west and southeast of the base and will identify resolutions to land use incompatibility issues.

#### **Accomplishments**

- This project is being viewed as a model for the rest of the country because of the groundwork that has already been done here and the positive impact this plan will have in ensuring base viability.
- The JLUS Policy Advisory Committee with membership from the City, County, school districts, State Land Department, State Commerce Department, property owners and developers has been meeting since April 2003.
- A public information open house was held July 9, 2003 - 125 people attended.
- A draft plan was presented at a public open house September 24th, 2003.



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### **Project**

#### **Develop Tucson as an Inland Port and International Economic Gateway (Puerto Nuevo)**

### **Description**

The creation of this multidimensional inland port will enhance Tucson's capability to manufacture, market and distribute its products throughout the world. The port will integrate services and facilities available in the areas of transportation, warehousing/logistics, manufacturing, research and international business services.

### **Accomplishments**

Federal funds of \$125,000 will support the identification of international traffic flowing through Tucson that could benefit from the development of an intermodal facility and potential sites for an International Trade Center. Preliminary promotional meetings have been held with U.S. Customs, the Arizona Governor's Office, and a Mexican agricultural association. The Tucson-Mexico Trade Office Director was appointed to the Governor's Canamex Corridor Task Force.



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### Project

#### Tucson-Mexico Passenger Train Service

#### Description

This project would develop passenger train service from Tucson's Downtown Train Depot to Northern and Western Mexico. Implementation of this rail passenger service would give Tucson a very unique and marketable character and convert Tucson into a hub for a new binational adventure tourism product.

#### Accomplishments

Received \$85,000 in federal funds to conduct an infrastructure needs assessment at the Downtown Train Depot. Tentative approval has been received from Union Pacific to allow passenger transportation along the Tucson-Nogales Railway pending an internal evaluation and discussions with Amtrak.

The Mexican Congress is considering a potentially historic legislative proposal originated by the U.S. community and businesses. This would grant commissary rights to railroads so that food and operational supplies could be brought on board for travel into Mexico.



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